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ABSTRACT

A questionnaire was developed for obtaining feedback from supervising (cooperating) teachers on the strengths and weaknesses of teacher education programs. Over a period of three years, the questionnaire was distributed to more than 550 teachers in the Florida State University teacher education program. The response rate increased over the three years, presumably because of the ease with which the instrument could be completed, its professional appearance, and the desire of the supervising teachers to have input into a program with which they were deeply involved. The supervising teachers were asked to rate the student teachers, the supervision provided by the university faculty, and the Office of Clinical Education and its area coordinators. As a result of the feedback, changes are planned in the following areas of education and administration: (1) teaching techniques; (2) class control techniques; (3) planning skills; (4) improvement of university supervision; (5) more effective use of observation time; (6) improvement of the quality of departmental supervisors' written evaluations of student teachers; and (7) improvement of the quality of suggestions to classroom supervising teachers. A copy of the questionnaire is included. (FG)

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AN INSTRUMENT FOR USE BY SUPERVISING TEACHERS IN EVALUATING STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAMS

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SP 018 032

AN INSTRUMENT FOR USE BY SUPERVISING TEACHERS IN EVALUATING STUDENT TEACHING PROGRAMS

Graduates consistently indicate that the student teaching experience is the single most productive component of their teacher education program (Flint, 1965; Roberts & Blankenship, 1970; Propkop, 1971; Seperson & Joyce, 1971; Henry & Beasley, 1977). No one occupies a more central role in the fulfillment of this experience than the supervising teacher. Research has shown the supervising teacher to be the most "significant other" in dealing with the needs of the student teacher (Karmos and Jacko, 1977). Today, however, the role of supervising teachers in teacher education programs has been expanded beyond that of being a "teacher of future teachers." This change has been necessitated by such events as the introduction of teacher education centers, year-long internships, changes in certification procedures, competency examinations, and new pro-active stances taken by professional organizations.

As the role of the supervising teacher expands, the need for better communication increases. Means must be established which provide cooperating teachers better opportunities to make suggestions and recommendations to teacher training

institutions. Such feedback from supervising teacher should be considered in curriculum development and evaluation.

Need for the Instrument

The kinds of information that can be most accurately relayed by the supervising teacher include: the perceived competence of the prospective graduate; evaluations of the quality of today's graduates; comparisons of today's student teachers with those of the past; the adequacy of the supervision and the assistance provided by the college; the appropriateness of the program components; and overall suggestions for the improvement of the program.

To gather and sort such information efficiently, the writers consulted with the university evaluation services office and interviewed several hundred cooperating teachers. They then arrived at the following guidelines for use in developing the data gathering instrument.

1. Clear, concise wording in the directions for item identification.
2. Ease of scoring and sorting.
3. Consistent marking of choices through the use of a simple rating scale.
4. Optional items to allow for expansion of the questionnaire or for special use by a specific department.

5. An open-ended free response section to encourage critical and creative thinking.

Following these guidelines, a questionnaire was developed which provides the means for recording the information on an official form in an efficient and uniform manner. (This form makes for easy compiling of a large amount of information on a regular basis). Keeping the format simple, attractive and easy to use allows for speedy completion and thus fosters a consistently high rate of return. By asking for anonymous responses, credibility and candidness are increased.

Development of the Instrument

Expert guidance in the development of the instrument was sought from the University Center for Evaluation Services. Two revisions were completed and then pilot-tested with both teachers and administrators engaged in teacher education programs. The final op-scan format for computerized scoring was printed by the National Computers Systems Center in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Over a period of three years, the questionnaire was distributed to more than 550 supervising teachers throughout the state of Florida. These teachers were engaged in the Florida State University teacher education program. The response rate from supervising teachers increased markedly over that three year period. It is assumed that this increase was

related to the ease with which the instrument could be completed and its professional appearance. In addition, supervising teachers appreciated the opportunity of having input into a program with which they were so deeply involved.

[INSTRUMENT INSERT]

Data and Results

As Table 1 reveals, teachers tend to be generous in their rating of student teachers. Clearly they see the strengths of the student teachers as being their rapport with pupils, teachers, and parents and the ease with which the student teachers accepted teacher guidance. However, many respondents were not overly impressed by the student teachers teaching techniques and knowledge of class control nor were they impressed with their planning skills.

[INSERT TABLE 1]

In order to strengthen the these areas, the following steps are being taken:

1. Teaching techniques
    A. Increased use of early field-based clinical experiences.
    B. Provision of these early experiences in various educational settings (e.g. open and self-contained; urban and rural; middle/junior high and senior high; primary/elementary and intermediate levels).

FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY
ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROGRAM
OFFICE OF FIELD EXPERIENCES

SUBJECT/GRADE LEVEL _____
COUNTY _____

This questionnaire is designed to help the Florida State University Office of Field Experiences evaluate its Associate Teaching Program. Your response to each of the following items will help us to evaluate our overall effectiveness and to make changes to better serve our Associate Teachers and the schools in which they will be placed.

Quarter (F) (W) (SP) (SU) 19____

E - Excellent
G - Good
F - Fair
P - Poor
NA - Not applicable

Use a soft lead pencil to respond to each item according to the key above.

		E	G	F	P	NA
I.	**Please rate your Associate Teacher on the overall adequacy of training brought to the field experience:**					
1.	Knowledge of content	1. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
2.	Planning skills	2. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
3.	Teaching methods/strategies	3. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
4.	Class control	4. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
5.	Evaluation of student progress	5. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
6.	Accepting and implementing constructive suggestions	6. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
7.	Overall teaching effectiveness as judged by the achievement of pupils taught	7. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
8.	Rapport with pupils	8. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
9.	Interaction with other teachers and administrators	9. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
10.	Ability to work effectively with parents	10. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
11.	Overall adequacy of preparation for Associate Teaching	11. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
II.	**Please rate the SUPERVISION provided by the TEACHING SPECIALIZATION DEPARTMENT FACULTY from Florida State University (e.g., English Ed., Math Ed., Home Ec. Ed., Art Ed., etc.) on the following:**					
12.	Amount of time devoted to observing the Associate Teacher teach	12. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
13.	Usefulness of the department supervisor's evaluations of the Associate Teacher	13. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
14.	Usefulness of suggestions provided by the department supervisor to me	14. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
15.	Openness of the department supervisor to discuss any real problems with me	15. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
16.	Special assistance provided by the department supervisor when requested	16. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
17.	Cooperation and compatability between the department supervisor and me	17. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
18.	Overall quality of supervision provided	18. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
19.	The department supervisor's visit would be most helpful to the Associate Teacher during weeks: (A) 1-2 (B) 3-4 (C) 5-6 (D) 7-8 (E) 9-10	19. (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
20.	The department supervisor's visit would be most helpful to me during weeks: (A) 1-2 (B) 3-4 (C) 5-6 (D) 7-8 (E) 9-10	20. (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
III.	**Please rate THE OFFICE OF FIELD EXPERIENCES AND THE AREA COORDINATOR on the following:**					
21.	Information provided in the ASSOCIATE TEACHING APPLICATION	21. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
22.	Information provided in the handbook, PROGRAM FOR ASSOCIATE TEACHING	22. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
23.	Assistance provided by the Coordinator during Associate Teaching (if requested)	23. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
24.	Evidence, through verbal or written communication and/or personal visitation, of the Coordinator's interest in helping me	24. (E)	(G)	(F)	(P)	(NA)
25.	Number of students or Associate Teachers you have supervised from any institution (A) 0 (B) 1 (C) 2 (D) 3 (E) 4 or more	25. (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
26.	How many were from FSU (A) 0 (B) 1 (C) 2 (D) 3 (E) 4 or more	26. (A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	(E)
27.	Have you taken or are you taking the FSU course: "Supervision of Associate Teaching"? (A) YES (B) NO	27. (A) YES			(B) NO	

IV. Optional Items:

28. OOOOO	29. OOOOO	30. OOOOO	31. OOOOO	32. OOOOO
33. OOOOO	34. OOOOO	35. OOOOO	36. OOOOO	37. OOOOO
38. OOOOO	39. OOOOO	40. OOOOO	41. OOOOO	42. OOOOO

See Reverse Side For Free Response

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FREE RESPONSE SECTION

Please identify specific strengths as well as areas for improvement in the professional preparation of our Associate Teachers.

I. COMMENTS REGARDING FSU'S TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

A. Strengths: _____

B. Areas for Improvement: _____

II. COMMENTS REGARDING SUPERVISION BY TEACHING SPECIALIZATION DEPARTMENT FACULTY FROM THE UNIVERSITY (e.g. Foreign Language Ed., Music Ed., Social Work Ed., Physical Ed., Library Science Ed., Visual Disabilities Ed., etc.) _____

III. GENERAL COMMENTS _____

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

PLEASE DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

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Table 1

Associate Teacher Ratings by Classroom Supervising Teachers

Item #	Adequacy of Training Skill	N	% E or G
1	Knowledge of Content	564	90
2	Planning Skills	559	82
3	Teaching Methods	558	84
4	Class Control	559	74
5	Evaluation of Students	560	87
6	Accepts Suggestions	558	92
7	Overall Effectiveness	558	91
8	Rapport with Pupils	558	93
9	Rapport with Teachers	558	93
10	Work with Parents	318	92
11	Overall Preparation	560	87

C. Increased preliminary screening of teacher education candidates in the basic communication and computational skills.

2. Class control techniques
   A. Demonstration of knowledge and application of several theoretical approaches to classroom management.
   B. Specific experiences to allow for the demonstration of ability to work with students having special needs.
   C. Clinical supervisory conferencing in the school setting.
3. Planning skills
   A. Training in the preparation of an Individual Educational Plan (IEP) for each student.
   B. Early and more specific documentation of the teacher candidates planning skills.
   C. Increased emphasis on the collaborative nature of teacher preparation.

The ratings by the classroom supervising teachers of the supervision by the university were not quite as high as those given the student teachers. As can be seen in Table 2, there appears to be need for improvement in the overall supervision by the university, in the effectiveness and use of time spent observing, and in the written evaluations and quality of the suggestions to the supervising teacher.

Verification of additional attention in these areas was further supported by the supervising teachers' statements on the free response section of the instrument.

Apparent disagreement existed regarding the specific weeks when supervising teachers thought that university supervisors should observe student teachers. The data appeared to reflect a tendency of supervisors to visit at times that were convenient for them but were not of the most benefit to student teachers and their supervising teachers.

[INSERT TABLE 2]

[INSERT TABLE 3]

To address the areas of deficiency, the following changes are being implemented:

1. Improvement of university supervision
   - A. Staff development in supervision techniques for professors assigned new supervisory roles.
   - B. Identification of the most effective time(s) during the field-based experience for the observation/evaluation visit(s) from the university supervisor.
   - C. More specificity in techniques of clinical supervision, including pre-observation conferencing, observation, data-anaylsis, post-observation conferencing, and conference evaluation.

Table 2

Supervision by University Departments as Rated by Classroom Supervising Teachers

Item #	Quality of Supervision	N	% E or G
12	Time Observing	538	55
13	Quality of Evaluations	538	75
14	Suggestions to Teacher	540	75
15	Openness	539	86
16	Special Assistance	273	89
17	Cooperation	538	87
18	Overall Supervision	521	71

Table 3

Visitation by University Department as Rated

by Classroom Supervising Teachers

Item #	Visitation Scheduling					
19	Visit Associate Teacher in Weeks:					
		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
	(N = 464)	4%	34	48	13	1
20	Visit Supervising Teacher in Weeks:					
		1-2	3-4	5-6	7-8	9-10
	(N = 473)	12%	34	40	12	1

D. Strengthening of collaborative efforts with school district personnel involved in internship programs by offering a formal training course in the supervision of student teachers.

E. Staff development workshops directed toward helping university supervisors improve leadership abilities, public relation skills, and listening techniques.

2. More effective use of observation time

A. Verification of the quality of early laboratory and clinical experiences through written documentation.

B. Training of university faculty in the diagnosing of strengths and weaknesses of student teachers and in prescribing appropriate remediation.

C. Implementation of observational strategies for collecting data on teacher behavior (verbal and non-verbal).

3. Improvement of the quality of departmental supervisors written evaluations of student teachers by:

A. Requesting that follow-up conferences be based on the results of competency-based instruments or objective observation instruments.

B. Designing pre-planning observation/participation experiences to focus on specifices and deal more with teaching behaviors.

C. Encouraging evaluations which reflect specific strengths and weaknesses and are provided early enough, with follow-up visits, to allow for maximum growth.

4. Improvement of the quality of suggestions to classroom supervising teachers by:

A. Insuring that suggestions are immediate, data-based, and presented in such a way that they can be easily understood.

B. Encouraging suggestions which are objectively derived and related to specific behaviors that will ensure more effective individual growth and change.

C. Providing in-school seminars to assist in identifying specific areas for development in student teachers; then stress the use of conferencing techniques, role playing situtations, and development of skills in using a wide range of objective instruments.

The teachers gave high ratings when it came to rating the Office of Clinical Education and its regionally-based Area Coordinators. The ratings, as revealed in Table 4, indicate that, although the items relating to the Office of Clinical Education received high evaluations, this section of the questionnaire was probably inadequate. Efforts are underway to expand this part of the questionnaire by asking for more specific responses and by including new questions in the current section entitled optional items. The first step in

this revision process - conducting individual interviews with a sample of supervising teachers - is now being undertaken.

Table 4

Ratings of the Office and Coordinators by Classroom Supervising Teachers

Item #	Forms/Activities	N	% E or G
21	Application Form	556	97
22	Handbook Information	561	97
23	Coordinator Assistance	345	98
24	Coordinator Interest	558	95

Conclusion

It has been the intent of the writers to provide an example of a comprehensive instrument for obtaining specific evaluative data related to teacher education programs. This instrument has provided a means for classroom teachers to report their perceptions of areas of strengths and weaknesses in teacher education programs. Feedback from instruments such as this can aid teacher training programs in program development and in decision making regarding future directions.

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